



Butterflies of Pheasant Branch Conservancy

Dreux J. Watermolen and Mike Reese





Andy Adams

View of Pheasant Branch Conservancy from the county-owned hill at the conservancy's north end. The various habitats found in the conservancy support diverse plant and animal communities.

Cover photo: Aphrodite Fritillary by Mike Reese.



Mike Reese

Discovering Pheasant Branch Conservancy

Pheasant Branch Conservancy, a regionally significant natural area, is located on the northwest side of Lake Mendota in central Dane County. Pheasant Branch Creek, a Lake Mendota tributary, meanders through the conservancy, which contains a marsh with open water, natural springs and seeps, prairies, old fields, lowland forests, and wooded hills. These habitats support a wide variety of plants and animals, including rare, threatened, and endangered species. Although surrounded on three sides by urban development, this easily accessible 500+ acre conservancy provides a quiet refuge for bird-watchers, hikers, and other nature enthusiasts.

The Dane County Parks Department owns the northern portion of the conservancy. The city of Middleton's Public Lands Department owns the southern portion, including a corridor that extends along Pheasant Branch Creek's South Branch. The city and county cooperatively manage the conservancy as a single ecological and recreational unit.





Using This Checklist

Butterfly watching, which became popular in the 1980s when close-focus binoculars and excellent butterfly guides became widely available, can be a relaxing way to enjoy Pheasant Branch Conservancy. This checklist includes all butterfly species that we have observed in the conservancy and a few that we expect to occur there. You can use the checklist in conjunction with a field guide as you explore Pheasant Branch.

Each kind of butterfly can be found only at certain times of the year—during the adult form’s “flight period.” Because of this, we present the checklist in calendar format, with symbols (◊ ◆) corresponding to the months when the adults of each species occur. The presence or absence of a symbol, however, does not indicate the abundance or probability of seeing a particular species in the conservancy. Depending on whether the season has been unusually cool or warm, the flight periods may be advanced or delayed. Droughty conditions can shorten butterfly life spans and flight periods. Unusually cool, wet seasons can also adversely affect butterfly numbers. Some butterflies, like the nonnative Cabbage White, have lengthy flight periods and can be found in the conservancy throughout the growing season. Others, like the Edward’s Hairstreak, have shorter flight periods or only occasionally pass through Pheasant Branch. In addition, butterfly populations fluctuate, with some species being abundant one season or year, but not in others. Bold-faced symbols (◆) indicate the months in which each species is most likely to be observed. For example, the Tawny Emperor can appear early one year and then late in another year, so that it may be found in June, July, and August, but in most years you would look for it in July.

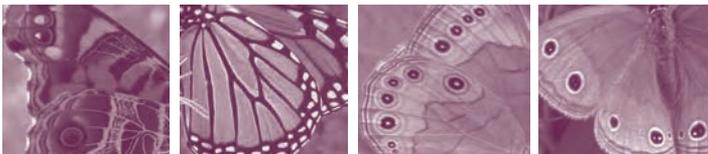
Scientists and guidebook authors have used a variety of common names for the various butterfly species, sometimes leading to confusion when consulting multiple sources or for novices unfamiliar with a species’ scientific name. We do not want to perpetuate this problem and therefore use common and scientific names from the *Checklist of North American Butterflies Occurring North of Mexico*, 2nd ed. published by the North American Butterfly Association (available online at: www.naba.org/pubs/enames2.html).



Many butterflies are closely associated with the plant species on which the females lay their eggs and on which their larvae (caterpillars) feed. In addition, adults often nectar (feed) on a particular plant species or group of species. Since many plants are associated with a particular habitat type, the butterflies are in turn associated with that same habitat. Along these lines, we identify general habitat types for each butterfly species to aid you in your search.

The relatively large number of butterfly species that occur in Pheasant Branch Conservancy (58 of the 156 documented from Wisconsin) points to the significance of this property for conservation and recreation. The conservancy's location within urban and urbanizing Dane County, where many native wildlife habitats continue to be degraded, lost, or fragmented, underscores the importance of the continued protection and wise management of this area. We hope that publication of this checklist will help awaken and foster public interest in such activities, because as human populations and development increase, Pheasant Branch Conservancy can only become more crucial for ensuring that local and regional biological diversity is maintained.

Because knowledge of Pheasant Branch Conservancy's fauna is always changing and additional species continue to be added to the list of the area's fauna, our checklist must be considered provisional. Your observations and discoveries can help fill in the gaps. To assist you, we've included blank lines within the checklist in places where we suspect additional species will be reported eventually. You can report new observations to the nonprofit organization Friends of Pheasant Branch (www.pheasantbranch.org), the "Butterflies of Wisconsin" web site (www.wisconsinbutterflies.org), or the authors.



Mike Reese

Checklist of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Butterflies



SPECIES	HABITAT(S)	SEASONAL OCCURRENCE						
		A	M	J	J	A	S	O
▶ SWALLOWTAILS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Giant Swallowtail <i>(Papilio cresphontes)</i>	Forests, Forest edges				◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Swallowtail <i>(Papilio polyxenes)</i>	Grasslands		◆	◆	◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Tiger Swallowtail <i>(Papilio glaucus)</i>	Forests, Forest edges		◆	◆	◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/>								
▶ WHITES								
<input type="checkbox"/> Checkered White <i>(Pontia protodice)</i>	Grasslands				◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cabbage White <i>(Pieris rapae)</i>	Grasslands	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/>								
▶ SULPHERS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Clouded Sulphur <i>(Colias philodice)</i>	Grasslands		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> Orange Sulphur <i>(Colias eurytheme)</i>	Grasslands			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/>								
<input type="checkbox"/>								
▶ HARVESTER								
<input type="checkbox"/> Harvester <i>(Feniseca tarquinius)</i>	Forests				◆	◆	◆	
▶ COPPERS								
<input type="checkbox"/> American Copper <i>(Lycaena phlaeas)</i>	Grasslands		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray Copper <i>(Lycaena dione)</i>	Wetlands, Grasslands			◆	◆			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bronze Copper <i>(Lycaena hyllus)</i>	Wetlands, Grasslands		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆



SPECIES	HABITAT(S)	SEASONAL OCCURRENCE						
		A	M	J	J	A	S	O
▶ HAIRSTREAKS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Coral Hairstreak <i>(Satyrium titus)</i>	Grasslands			◆	◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Acadian Hairstreak <i>(Satyrium acadica)</i>	Wetlands			◆	◆			
<input type="checkbox"/> Edward's Hairstreak <i>(Satyrium edwardsii)</i>	Oak savannas				◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Banded Hairstreak <i>(Satyrium calanus)</i>	Forests, Forest edges				◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/>								
<input type="checkbox"/>								
▶ BLUES								
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Tailed Blue <i>(Everes comyntas)</i>	Grasslands			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> 'Spring' Spring Azure <i>(Celastrina ladon ladon)</i>	Forests, Wetlands	◆	◆	◆	◆			
<input type="checkbox"/> 'Summer' Spring Azure <i>(Celastrina ladon neglecta)</i>	Forests				◆	◆	◆	
▶ FRITILLARIES								
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Spangled Fritillary <i>(Speyeria cybele)</i>	Grasslands			◆	◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Aphrodite Fritillary <i>(Speyeria aphrodite)</i>	Grasslands				◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver-bordered Fritillary <i>(Boloria selene)</i>	Wetlands, Grasslands			◆	◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Meadow Fritillary <i>(Boloria bellona)</i>	Grasslands, Wetlands	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/>								
▶ CRESCENTS AND CHECKERSPOTS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Pearl Crescent <i>(Phyciodes tharos)</i>	Grasslands			◆	◆		◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore Checkerspot <i>(Euphydryas phaeton)</i>	Wetlands			◆	◆			
<input type="checkbox"/>								



SPECIES	HABITAT(S)	SEASONAL OCCURRENCE						
		A	M	J	J	A	S	O
TRUE BRUSHFOOTS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Question Mark (<i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>)	Forests, Forest edges				◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Comma (<i>Polygonia comma</i>)	Forests, Forest edges	◆			◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gray Comma (<i>Polygonia progne</i>)	Forests, Forest edges			◆	◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Mourning Cloak (<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>)	Forests, Wetlands		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> American Lady (<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>)	Grasslands		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> Painted Lady (<i>Vanessa cardui</i>)	Grasslands		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/> Red Admiral (<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>)	Forests, Forest edges	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Buckeye (<i>Junonia coenia</i>)	Grasslands			◆	◆	◆		
ADMIRALS AND RELATIVES								
<input type="checkbox"/> Red-spotted Purple (<i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>)	Forests, Forest edges				◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Viceroy (<i>Limenitis archippus</i>)	Wetlands, Forest edges				◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/>								
EMPERORS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Hackberry Emperor (<i>Asterocampa celtis</i>)					◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Tawny Emperor (<i>Asterocampa clyton</i>)					◆	◆	◆	
SATYRS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Pearly-eye (<i>Enodia anthedon</i>)	Woodlands				◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Eyed Brown (<i>Satyroides eurydice</i>)	Wetlands				◆	◆	◆	
<input type="checkbox"/> Appalachian Brown (<i>Satyroides appalachia</i>)	Forests				◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Little Wood-Satyr (<i>Megisto cymela</i>)	Forests				◆	◆		
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Wood-Nymph (<i>Cercyonis pegala</i>)	Grasslands				◆	◆	◆	◆
<input type="checkbox"/>								
<input type="checkbox"/>								



SPECIES	HABITAT(S)	SEASONAL OCCURRENCE						
		A	M	J	J	A	S	O
▶ MONARCHS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Monarch <i>(Danaus plexippus)</i>	Grasslands			◇	◇	◇	◇	
▶ SPREAD-WING SKIPPERS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Silver-spotted Skipper <i>(Epargyreus clarus)</i>	Forests			◇	◇	◇		
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Cloudywing <i>(Thorybes pylades)</i>	Forests, Forest edges			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Sleepy Duskywing <i>(Erynnis brizo)</i>	Forests, Forest edges			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Juvenal's Duskywing <i>(Erynnis juvenalis)</i>	Forests, Oak savannas			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Sootywing <i>(Pholisora catullus)</i>	Grasslands				◇	◇	◇	
<input type="checkbox"/>								
<input type="checkbox"/>								
▶ GRASS-SKIPPERS								
<input type="checkbox"/> Least Skipper <i>(Ancyloxypha numitor)</i>	Grasslands, Wetlands			◇	◇	◇	◇	
<input type="checkbox"/> European Skipper <i>(Thymelicus lineola)</i>	Grasslands			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Peck's Skipper <i>(Polites peckius)</i>	Grasslands, Wetlands			◇	◇	◇		
<input type="checkbox"/> Long Dash <i>(Polites mystic)</i>	Grasslands			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Broken-Dash <i>(Wallengrenia egeremet)</i>	Forests, Forest edges				◇	◇		
<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware Skipper <i>(Anatrytone logan)</i>	Grasslands				◇	◇		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mulberry Wing <i>(Poanes massasoit)</i>	Wetlands			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Hobomok Skipper <i>(Poanes hobomok)</i>	Woodlands		◇	◇				
<input type="checkbox"/> Dion Skipper <i>(Euphyes dion)</i>	Wetlands			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Dash <i>(Euphyes conspicua)</i>	Wetlands			◇	◇			
<input type="checkbox"/> Dun Skipper <i>(Euphyes vestris)</i>	Grasslands				◇	◇		
<input type="checkbox"/>								
<input type="checkbox"/>								



Accessing Pheasant Branch Conservancy

From Highway 12:

Take Highway 12 to the city of Middleton. Turn east on Century Avenue (County Hwy M). Take Century Avenue to Pheasant Branch Road, then turn north (left) on Pheasant Branch Road.

From the City of Madison:

Take University Avenue west to Middleton. Turn north (right) on Allen Boulevard. Take Allen Boulevard to Century Avenue. Turn west (left) on Century Avenue. Take Century Avenue to Pheasant Branch Road, then turn north (right) on Pheasant Branch Road.

City and county parking lots are located on the east side of Pheasant Branch Road. The city parking lot is 0.6 miles north of Century Avenue. The county parking lot is 1.2 miles north of Century Avenue. A pedestrian trail leads from the parking lot at the park in Middleton's Orchid Heights neighborhood into the county property. The city of Middleton maintains pedestrian entrances on Century Avenue near Branch Street. From the Century Avenue entrances, you can access hiking trails into the marsh or along the South Branch of Pheasant Branch Creek.

Conservancy hours are 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Restored oak savanna and prairie in the northern part of Pheasant Branch Conservancy.



Ancy Adams



Butterfly Watching Etiquette

As with all popular recreational pursuits, there are some etiquette fundamentals that make for more rewarding experiences. Please follow these basics as you explore Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

Protect the welfare of butterflies and other wildlife:

- Observe and photograph butterflies without disturbing them or their habitats.
- Avoid chasing or repeatedly “flushing” butterflies. Startled butterflies may waste energy searching for a new “safe” area.
- Resist the temptation to handle butterflies, eggs, or larvae.

Protect Pheasant Branch Conservancy:

- Stay on existing trails and pathways to avoid disturbing fragile habitats.
- Walk carefully to avoid trampling plants that might be food sources or cover for butterflies.
- Take only photographs. Leave only footprints. Pick up litter and carry out trash.

Respect the rights of others:

- Observe all laws, rules, and regulations, especially those posted on conservancy signs.
- Be considerate of others visiting the conservancy.
- Unleashed dogs can disturb butterflies, other wildlife, and other conservancy visitors.



Mike Freese



Learning More

Publications

The Geology, Cultural History, and Ecology of the Pheasant Branch Watershed and Pheasant Branch Conservancy of Middleton, Wisconsin by Friends of Pheasant Branch, Inc., Middleton (2003). (Available on the web at: www.pheasantbranch.org)

A Field Guide to Eastern Butterflies, 2nd ed. by P.A. Opler (1998). Houghton Mifflin Co., New York. (Peterson Field Guide Series)

The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies by R.M. Pyle (1981). Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

The Audubon Society Handbook for Butterfly Watchers by R.M. Pyle (1984). Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

The Butterflies of North America: A Natural History and Field Guide by J.A. Scott (1986). Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Butterflies of North America by J.P. Brock and K. Kaufman (2003). Houghton Mifflin Co., New York.

Butterflies of Wisconsin by J.A. Ebner (1970). Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee.

Checklist of Wisconsin Butterflies by L.A. Ferge (2002). Wisconsin Entomological Society Special Publication No. 5. (Available on the web at: www.entomology.wisc.edu/wes/)

The Natural History of Butterflies by J. Feltwell (1986). Facts on File Publications, New York.

How to Spot Butterflies by P.T. Sutton and C. Sutton (1999). Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston.

Butterflies through Binoculars: the East by Jeffrey Glassberg (1999). Oxford University Press, New York.

Common Butterflies and Skippers of Eastern North America (DVD). Brownbag Productions, Hillsborough, NC.

Butterflies of the North Woods by L. Weber (2001). Kollath-Stensaas, Duluth.

Web Sites

"Butterflies of Wisconsin" web site: www.wisconsinbutterflies.org/

North American Butterfly Association web site: www.naba.org/

United States Geological Survey's "Butterflies of North America" web site: www.npwr.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/bflyusa.htm

The Lepidopterists' Society web site: alpha.furman.edu/~snyder/snyder/lep/

The Xerces Society web site: www.xerces.org/



Notes and Sketches 





Notes and Sketches 



Andy Adams

About the Authors

Dreux Watermolen is an ecologist who has lived adjacent Pheasant Branch Conservancy for the past 11 years. He currently serves as the Chief of Science Information Services for the Wisconsin DNR and is interested in the zoogeography, life history, and taxonomy of Wisconsin's rich biological diversity.

Mike Reese has been an educator in Wautoma, Wisconsin for over 20 years. He spends much of his spare time taking nature photographs in central Wisconsin and maintains a web site on the butterflies of Wisconsin (www.wisconsinbutterflies.org). He occasionally gets distracted from butterflies and takes photos of other insects, especially damselflies, some which were published recently in *Damselflies of the North Woods* (2005).

Production

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